

You Have Got To Be Kidding Me

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You Have Got To Be Kidding Me

by [TheAnonFanOn](#)

Summary

George never realized how much he hated humidity, but now he's thinking he might get used to it.

Being here with Clay was feeling as natural as breathing, and he was beginning to struggle with the idea of going back to England. As much as he loved his home, he was starting to like it here in sunny, humid Florida... For one particular, obvious reason. When George is finally flown out to meet his long-time friend Clay, he's hit with a lot of new (and unexpected) emotions. No one could have predicted the outcome of this... Except maybe all their subscribers.

I have no idea how long this will end up being, but I'll try to update regularly!

Chapter 1

A/N: I was inspired by several other writers to work on this story, and also a dream (pun totally intended) I had the other night. Literally stopped reading mid book because I HAD to get to writing. Also, quick heads up: This is entirely meant to be for entertainment only and not to be taken seriously. I love both Dream and George, and wholly support their choices-- If they express discomfort with being shipped or with fan art or fanfics being written about them, this will immediately be deleted.

I will try to update when I can (quarantine is messsssing with my schedule) and just so you know, I am completely making up my description of Dream. He has chosen to protect his identity (for good reason and I fully respect his decision) and so I'm totally BSing the whole thing. With no further ado, enjoy!

Stepping off the plane, he was relived to be hit with an immense amount of wonderful air conditioning. Even on the brief walk through the jet bridge he had begun to sweat; It was hot as all hell at a sweltering 82 degrees Fahrenheit. But onward George trekked to retrieve his suitcase from baggage claim.

The brightly lit and very colorful airport was packed full of people, many of which were sporting Disney t-shirts and Mickey-Mouse ears. In passing, George noticed two Disney shops, which he was confused by-- Why would you shop for Disney merchandise at the airport instead of at the park itself?-- and hurriedly shoved through the hoards of humans in his way.

When the short brunette had finally gotten his hands on his suitcase, he pulled out his phone to text his ride.

George : *are you here?*

Clay: *Yep. I'm outside, by number 7. I drive a silver Subaru.*

George: *ok*

George steeled himself for the humidity and headed out into the bright, clear day in Orlando, attempting to find Clay's silver Subaru. In all honesty, George had no idea what a Subaru looked like, which correlated perfectly and irritatingly with the fact that he had no idea what the driver looked like either.

Blonde hair, look for blonde hair.

Soon the young Brit was stood beneath the purple sign for number 7, peering through the crowd to try and find a silver Subaru, any silver Subaru. Unfortunately, at least three silver cars were parked on the curb, and all of their windows were tinted too dark for him to pick out his blonde buddy's hair.

"Shit," He muttered. "This is wonderful."

On the verge of giving up, George started to pull out his phone again, not sure if he was going to google what a Subaru looked like or if he was going to call Clay.

"Hey!"

The brunette jumped violently at the familiar voice and snapped his head up, suddenly locking eyes with a grinning, tan, blonde boy, behind the wheel of a silver SUV.

"I'm over here. Haven't you ever seen a Subaru? I thought you were colorblind, not legally blind."

"Shut up and let me in. I'm sweating my ass off out here."

Wheezing out a laugh, Clay popped the trunk on his car and hopped out to help George put his bags away. George blinked, not having expected him to be so tall.

And so cute.

As soon as the blue suitcase was loaded up, George yanked the car door open and climbed in, wanting and needing some relief from the hot weather. It was very different than Britain, and so far he was not a fan.

The sound of Clay shutting his door caught Georges attention, and he turned to look at him, *really* look at him, for the first time. Clay had shaggy, dirty blonde hair, all awry atop his head. There seemed to be a permanent smile attached to his tanned face, his lips stretched across straight white teeth, which gave him dimples on both sides of his mouth. His nose was covered in scattered freckles, thin, and a little crooked, as if it had been broken and never healed quite right. And his eyes were confusing-- Of course, George couldn't see color exactly the same as everyone else, so everything after yellow was just... Darker yellow. So the fact that Clay's eyes were something between yellow and blue was odd. They were still leaning towards yellow, but they weren't quite the same as all the other colors in the world.

In short, George was transfixed.

But when Clay's face started to move closer, it snapped the Brit out of his little world and brought him back into reality.

"So great to finally meet you in person, dude!" The blonde engulfed his friend in a huge, tight hug, leaning over the center console of the car.

George smiled and returned the embrace, before leaning back and shaking his head. "You're quite a bit taller than I would have thought."

"And you're quite a b--"

A car horn bleated from behind them, making George jump.

"Yeah, yeah," Clay chuckled as he threw the car into drive and pulled away from the curb. "Put on your seatbelt, buddy. We got a bit of a drive to my place."

"Ah, alright," Attempting to blink away the odd feeling of shock at seeing his best friend for the first time, the brunette clipped his seatbelt into place and looked out the windshield. It gave him a little anxiety to sit where the driver should be, but he had known this would be the case and prepped himself by taking a dramamine when he got off the flight. Driving had always given him

anxiety as it was, but sitting in the drivers seat and being out of control of the car nearly gave him a panic attack. "Jesus, slow down!"

"I'm only going ten over."

"Ten too many! Slow *down*!"

"You've been here five minutes and you're already making demands," The blonde rolled his green eyes, but eased off the gas just a bit.

Silence fell between them. George wasn't sure how to feel-- There was some kind of electricity in the air. It felt heavy. Perhaps it was because he was seeing the embodiment of this familiar voice for the first time? Or, more likely, because Clay didn't coincide with the image of Clay in George's head. George had for some reason always pictured Clay to have shorter hair, and just.. Not so tall. It frustrated him, to always be the short one.

"Are you excited to see Florida?" Clay questioned, breaking the silence. The brits brown eyes darted to his companion before he looked out the window to his left.

"I'm excited to get a personal tour of the area," He smiled lightly, watching tall, skinny palm trees fly by. There wasn't a single cloud in the sky, and everything seemed so *open*. Accustomed to the tight-knit streets of England cities, George was awe-struck by the wide stretches of nothing but trees and car-packed roads, as they left the hustle and bustle of Orlando behind them. "How come it's so damn hot here?"

"It's not that hot, it's just humid. It's gonna rain tonight, that'll cool things off." The blonde commented, a shrug in his tone.

"Rain?" A frown fluttered across George's face, as he doubted such clear skies could entail a rainy evening.

"Aren't you used to rain?"

"It doesn't actually rain that often in the UK."

"Well it rains pretty often here."

"It's lovely that the first in-person conversation we're having is about the weather. How bland." George chuckled, turning to look at Clay. Clay smiled at his comment.

"What would you rather talk about?"

"...What're your plans for this week?" George said after a moment of thought.

"First I'm gonna get you set up at my place. I have a Murphy bed in my office, since it's *technically* the guest room, so that's where you'll be sleeping. Then I think I'm gonna take you to lunch at this bar on the beach a few miles south of my apartment. Great fish tacos."

"God, if it ever gets out that you '*took me to lunch*,' the fans will have a mental breakdown."

Clay wheezed. "It's not a date, George, don't worry. There's no donos pressuring you to tell me you love me here."

"Thank God."

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George was not excited to set foot in the humidity again, but it was only a meter or two to the door of Clay's flat. The building was, like most things, pale yellow, and it stretched far down the parking lot. The roof was a dark brown stucco. Eyeing the rickety-looking wooden stairs, George cautiously crawled out of the SUV. Clay was already heaving George's blue suitcase out of the trunk.

"If I didn't know any better I would've thought you brought your whole damn PC," The Floridian huffed. "What the hell did you pack, man?"

"I sort of just threw all my summer clothes in. And my laptop." George laughed.

"Christ," Clay muttered, setting down the suitcase at the top of the stairs and pulling his key ring out of his pocket to unlock the door.

Inside, George began to look around. There was a small entry-way area, a few pairs of shoes piled under a long and low table. To the side of that was a door-less doorway that led to the tiny kitchen. There was a rattan table with three chairs placed haphazardly around it, directly beside a massive fridge that was embedded into the wall. The counters were spotless, other than a small dish-drying rack next to the sink. Just past the pantry, which was to the right of the sink, was a white sliding door.

Clay carefully pushed past George and slid the white door open, rolling Georges suitcase behind him. The brit silently followed suit, and found himself gaping at the size of the living room.

The ceilings were much higher than he would have expected form an apartment, and there was somehow enough room for both a couch and a love seat, stationed in the shape of an L in juxtaposition to the back wall, which dissolved entirely into a sliding glass door that opened up to a balcony. On the wall facing the long grey couch was a mounted flatscreen, and beside it was a set of two doors. One was open, through which George could see a desk with a formidable PC setup. That was the room Clay entered next.

"Alrighty," The Floridian said, turning to George once the Brit had followed him into the guest room. "Welcome to my humble home. That--" He pointed to yet another white door, on the wall to the left. "--Is the bathroom. I hope you don't mind sharing."

"Not at all," George shook his head. Clay was being incredibly accommodating, by paying for his flight to Florida and letting him stay in his flat. George was very grateful, no matter the situation.

"Cool. Sorry my setup is taking up a bunch of your space. The bed's over there, and you saw the kitchen. There's not much else to it." Another sparkling smile broke out across Clay's face, and George felt his heart stutter at the sight. It was so odd to be able to see the man behind the voice that he knew so well. But, of course, staring was rude, and so he needed to stop gawking.

"Thank you," George smiled back gently.

"No problem! I'm super excited to have you here." Clay moved forward and grabbed George in a hug once more. This time, George was assaulted by the smell of apples and cinnamon, and he faltered for a moment before returning the warm and comfortable embrace.

After a moment, which for some reason felt longer than it should have, Clay stepped back. Before he could speak, though, George piped up.

"Did you have apple pie for breakfast or something?"

"What?" Clay blinked, frowning in confusion.

"You smell like apple pie. Or apple juice and cinnamon. Or.. something." Realizing how weird he sounded, George's voice trailed off.

"Oh," The Floridian considered this for a moment, before smiling again. "No, I didn't. Although I did buy a gallon of apple juice, since I know you like it."

"I would love a glass of apple juice right now," George grinned brightly, attempting to ignore the light blush that came to his cheeks at how considerate Clay was. "It's so hot outside I think I could chug the whole thing in one go."

"I dare you to try it."

"Fucking watch me, then!"

Laughing, the two young men marched to the kitchen.

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"Christ, it's absolutely pouring." George murmured, sitting out on the balcony and watching the rain come down in sheets.

"Yeah. Hopefully it's not too wet outside for our adventure tomorrow."

"We'll be outside?" George gave him a nervous sideways glance.

"Well, yeah. It's meant to be great out, in the 90's I think."

"I'll have a heat stroke!"

"You'll be fine."

George huffed at this and returned his gaze to the rainy evening. The sun was just passing beneath the horizon.

His stomach growled.

"We ate, like, two hours ago! How are you hungry?" Clay laughed, incredulous.

"I have a fast metabolism," George chuckled, smiling at him. "I'll just have some apple juice and I'll be fine."

"If you say so," The blonde shrugged. "I'm gonna put on a movie, I think. Whaddya want to watch?"

"I dunno, I don't watch a lot of movies."

"Star Wars?"

"Sounds perfect."

And so they headed inside to watch Star Wars together. But, jet lag weighed on George, and he quickly drifted off, leaning his head onto Clay's shoulder and snoring lightly.

Clay was frozen.

He wasn't exactly sure what he was supposed to do at this point.

George was curled up against his side, fast asleep. The movie was over and the credits were rolling.

And Clay despised the idea of getting up.

Ever since their first video collaboration, Clay had admired George. It had gotten more complicated when Clay saw George's first face reveal, as he realized suddenly that George was very attractive, and Clay hadn't anticipated feeling the way he did. But, as time went on, Clay accepted his feelings, and simply lived with it. He made do with playful, friendly flirting and joking around. He did what he could to act like he wasn't actually attracted to George and play it off as fun and games for the fans.

But now that George was really here, it was getting much much harder to ignore his emotions.

And his immense urge to kiss the top of George's head, carry him to his room, and tuck him into bed.

He doesn't feel the same. He doesn't feel the same, Clay chanted mentally. *Wake him up and tell him to go to bed. Don't do anything stupid and fuck up the friendship.*

But he just couldn't bring himself to open his mouth.

He didn't want to ruin this moment; It felt so perfect to have George's slender frame pressed against his own, and he was worried George would be embarrassed for having fallen asleep on him.

Then, just as Clay was about to speak in attempts to rouse his friend, George jumped, his brown eyes flying open as he gasped.

"Shit, what was that?" The Floridian blinked, shocked.

"I--" George stared at him in confusion for a second, before he seemed to recognize Clay. "I had one of those things where you fall in your dream."

"Oh," A laugh shook Clay's shoulders. "Alright then. Well, the uh, the movie's over. I'm going to bed, it's pretty late now. See you in the morning, yeah?"

"Yeah," George yawned. "See you in the morning."

With that, Clay retreated to his room and shut the door.

Lord, you have got to be kidding me. What the hell am I supposed to do now?

Chapter 2

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

Sighing contentedly, George leaned against Clay, their hands intertwined and rested against the tall blonde's chest. They bathed in sunlight as George felt Clay's heartbeat through his shirt.

There wasn't a single thing that could make this more perfect.

"George, honey," Clay breathed, his voice low and kind. "Can I ask you something?"

"Yes," George responded, a bit too quickly. *Ask me anything. I'd give you everything.*

"Why..." The blonde spoke, barely above a whisper, gently turning George's head to look him in the eye. "...Are you pretending?"

"What?" The brit blinked, confused.

"Stop pretending. You know how you feel."

"What're you--"

Without warning, Clay shoved George away.

George jumped, gasping for air and absolutely in shock.

It was... A dream?

"Shit, what was that?" Clay's voice caught his attention.

Not quite sure how to respond, George fumbled for a plausible story. "I-- I had one of those things where you fall in your dream."

"Oh. Alright then," The Floridian chuckled. "Well, the uh, the movie's over. I'm going to bed, it's pretty late now. See you in the morning, yeah?"

"Yeah," The brunette faked a yawn, despite being wide awake. "See you in the morning."

Long after the blonde had shut his door, George still sat on the couch. The electric tension he had felt in the air remained, and he hated it.

For some ridiculous and unfathomable reason, the young man couldn't connect the Dream he knew with the Clay he was seeing.

Clay seemed so distant from Dream.

Frustrated and stressed, the brown-eyed Brit finally rose from the couch and decided to take a hot shower.

In the bathroom, George noticed that it connected to both his room and Clay's, and promptly

locked both doors.

He hung his sleep shirt and sleep pants on the faded gold door handle and fussed over the confusing controls for the shower. After nearly five minutes he figured it out and climbed under the running water. It stung, nearly to the point of boiling, but George didn't care. He was too engrossed in his thoughts.

As he went to wash his face, he realized he had left the bottle of face wash on the sink counter, and peeled back the shower curtain to go grab it--

"Oh, fucking hell--!" George yelped, nearly slipping and falling flat on his ass in the shower. "Oh, Christ..."

The clothes that were hung on the doorknob had, at first glance, appeared to be a person crouched in the corner, and had startled the young man. He laughed weakly at his own ridiculous reaction, chalking it up to his frayed nerves, and grabbed his face wash.

Hours later, George could hear bird chirping outside. He couldn't believe that he hadn't got an ounce of sleep all night long; The sun was coming up and he hadn't closed his eyes once! How ridiculous.

Nonetheless, and knowing he *definitely* wouldn't be able to sleep now that the birds were making such a racket outside, George rose from his bed and marched to the kitchen to try and find a coffeemaker.

Clay woke up smiling, and just knew he would be smiling all week long. George was finally here with him, really here. The Floridian was so excited to show his best friend the sights of Florida, and to spend in-person time with him. Eyes bright and attitude brighter, the blonde rose from his bed and bounced into the living room.

"You're in a good mood."

Startled, Clay locked eyes on George, who was seated in the love seat. There were dark circles under his eyes, and he seemed to be curling in on himself, angling himself around the steaming mug of coffee in his hands as if it were his lifeline.

And, oddly, there's some sort of energy in the air, as if the oxygen particles had been supercharged.

"You don't look so good, buddy," Clay murmured, his smile gone, concern filling his tone. He tried not to make it obvious how worried he was, but seemed to be failing. "Are you feeling okay? Do you feel sick?"

"No," The brunette flashed him a smile. "I'm alright. Just didn't sleep well."

"Oh," Clay said, thinking he sounded like an idiot. "Okay."

Heaving deep breaths, Clay tried to wipe the tears from his face, and failed. More just took the place of those he wiped away.

I hate myself, I hate myself, I hate myself, He thought, angrily. *What the hell is wrong with me?*

He had ended the discord call with George ten minutes ago. George had said he was talking to a girl he met a few days ago, and it had absolutely torn Clay's heart to shreds.

He doesn't know how you feel, dumbass, of course he's going to be interested in other people! Then, laughing bitterly and without humor, the blonde spoke aloud to himself. "Wow, real fucking bold of you to assume he would be interested in *you*, even if he did know how you feel."

It had been two months since Clay realized that he had a crush on his best friend. There had been some thought that he had a chance for the first few days, because Clay had an inflated ego about his capability to sway George. But his confidence began to crumble by the day as George refused to reciprocate his silly flirting, and came to the realization that George must be straight. And even if he wasn't, there was no way that he would be attracted to Clay.

I can't fuck up what little relationship I have with him just because I'm jealous, He thought. *I can't just stop being his friend because I want more than that. I just have to get over myself. I'll get over him eventually.*

If only it were that easy.

As time went on, Clay only fell further for George. His friend's endless patience and empathy made it difficult not to love him. When Clay's sister was in a car accident and might not survive, George was there to support him, every step of the way. Clay couldn't understand why the young man was so kind to someone he hadn't actually met before, but was deeply appreciative of his friend. There was nothing Clay could do but fall hopelessly in love.

Because of this, of course, Clay was disgusted with himself.

He couldn't understand why he felt the way he did. Yes, he knew that George was as pure of heart as they come, and he knew that George's smile could put the light of angels to shame, and he knew that George's laugh was enchanting, but he just could not comprehend the fact that he hadn't moved on.

There was nothing to be done, in all honesty, and so Clay decided to play his last card.

"Hey, what're you doing in three weeks?" Clay asked one night on a discord call with George.

"Uhh... Nothing, I don't think. Do you have another video idea?"

"No. Actually, I was thinking of flying you out here to Florida."

Silence.

The longer George was quiet, the more scared Clay got. *Does he not want to meet me?*

"That would be amazing!" George exclaimed. "I would love that!"

Breathing a sigh of relief, Clay grinned. "Great." *Maybe now if I meet him in person, I'll be able to get some kind of closure.*

Sipping his coffee, Clay took a seat on the gray couch. He was a little disappointed that George was sat on the love seat, so Clay couldn't sit next to him, but he figured it was for the better. *You can't indulge yourself in this. Just because he's here doesn't mean you have a right to treat him like a toy. Don't freak him out.*

"So what's the plan for today?" George asked quietly, looking at Clay.

"I've got an adventure planned."

"What kind of adventure?"

"You'll see. I'm gonna make us some actual breakfast, then shower. Then we'll head out."

"Sounds good to me."

Without another word, Clay rose and retreated to the kitchen, to make a batch of scrambled eggs. He couldn't sit there another minute and feel the immense tension between the two of them. There was no explanation for it, but something was off, and it had Clay worrying. The blonde had jumped to the worst of conclusions, and thought that George had figured out that Clay had feelings for him. He was deeply concerned that their friendship was on the line.

Clay stepped out of the bathroom, dressed in his favorite Tommy Bahama shorts and a simple green polo shirt. Thinking he looked pretty good, he was taken aback when he saw George standing out on the balcony, looking blissful and heartbreakingly handsome.

George was wearing a pair of khaki shorts and a deep blue t-shirt that fit him perfectly, which was an incredible testament, because it somehow tore Clay's attention from... Literally anything else. The blonde was struggling to keep his breath even, and his heart appeared to have stopped.

It was irritating, the fact that such a simple outfit could induce such a reaction, but Clay couldn't help but marvel at how attractive his friend was.

Then, the brown-haired angel turned to look at his admirer, and smiled brightly. "Ready for our adventure?"

It was a moment before Clay could respond. "Yes! Let's get going."

"You have got to be kidding-- An *alligator wrestling show*?" George was absolutely incredulous. He had never seen an alligator before, and he was not exactly ecstatic to do so.

"Yeah!" Clay grinned. "It's a real Florida-type experience. Well, the exaggerated version. But we get to try it too!"

"I'm sorry, *what*?"

"We get to try and wrestle an alligator!"

"You're fucking crazy."

Clay wheezed and pulled his friend forward, in the direction of the seating area.

They settled near the back, which helped quell George's fear for the time being, but when a grizzly-looking man in a safari hat appeared in front of them sporting a crooked-toothed grin, his nerves were on end once more.

The event sort of went by in a blur. George was nearly shaking, he was so worried for the poor man in the safari hat-- The alligator nearly tore off his leg!-- And couldn't believe that Clay was smiling the whole time. When the show seemed to be coming to a close, Clay hopped up from his seat and dragged George down to the very front of the enclosure.

"Ye' volunteering?" The man in the safari hat smiled at Clay.

"Yep!" Clay practically vaulted himself into the enclosure next to the man, and George let out an odd, panicked noise.

"You'll die! Are you insane?" He squeaked.

"I'll be fine, I've done it before," The blonde leaned his elbows on the edge of the enclosure and smirked at George. "What, are you worried about me?"

"Yes!" George said, without thinking. "Who the hell will I make videos with if you get killed by an alligator?"

He knew there were different motivations behind his concern, but he hid it behind a bullshit excuse. He had realized sometime during his sleepless night that he must be attracted to Clay-- He couldn't come up with any other reason for the tension he felt between them. And he wasn't at all surprised that he was suddenly feeling this; Clay was exactly his type.

And his type was "never gonna happen, you twat."

Clay was painfully attractive, to a degree that must have degraded the confidence of everyone he met. Even George, who was generally confident in himself, felt plain in comparison to his com[anion. The tousled blonde hair and careless attitude was so endearing. George wanted nothing more than to hide himself and Clay away forever to protect him from everything, despite the fact that Clay was clearly a strong young man and was more than capable of braving the world. And on

top of that, his perfect smile was so beautiful it hurt George's heart.

His heart that he knew would get broken when he flew back to Britain at the end of the trip.

George was certain he had no chance with Clay.

So I might as well just play along with this and make do.

"It wasn't that bad!"

"Yes it was!" George slammed the car door behind him. "You could have *died*, Dream!"

"Uh... We're not on stream, you can call me Clay," The Floridan chuckled.

George blinked, not having realized what he said. "Oh. Old habits die hard, I guess."

Laughing, Clay locked his car and headed for the door of his apartment. His brunette companion followed behind him quietly, frowning, still irritated that Clay had deemed it necessary to wrestle with an alligator.

Once they were inside, George went to the guest room and got out his laptop. "Can we play some Minecraft? Please? Something less insane."

Clay, perpetually smiling, nodded, and sat himself down at his PC setup. George settled onto his bed and booted up his backup Minecraft server, on his personal laptop.

It all clicked into place as they played. The tension faded into nothingness.

George finally connected *Dream* with *Clay*. It was wonderful, being able to see as Clay burst out in a wheezing fit when he killed George and watch as Clay nearly fell out of his seat in surprise when George pulled a great trick on him.

Everything became as easy as breathing as they chased each other through their Minecraft worlds, and George felt himself falling even further. He wasn't sure how to feel about it, but he didn't really care at the moment.

He was just happy to finally feel like his best friend wasn't a stranger anymore.

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Chapter End Notes

Hey!!

First, THANK YOU ALL SO MUCH! I am absolutely overwhelmed by the amount of hits, kudos, and kind comments that I've received, especially after only posting this less than 24 hours ago. I am so honored that so many people are enjoying my writing!

Second, I want to give credit where credit is due. I am majorly inspired to write this by the fic "Don't Call Me Sweetheart" by passmethemolly. I'm realizing that this fic is fairly similar to theirs, and I just want to make sure they get the credit and love they deserve. They've written two wonderful DreamNotFound stories and you should totally check them out! I've included a short list of DreamNotFound stories I've recently read that are very much worth checking out!!

1. Don't Call Me Sweetheart - passmethemolly
2. Chasing Snowflakes - passmethemolly
3. Allies and more - hiyacaramel

Chapter 3

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

((A/N: Minor trigger warning. Small bit of short angst in reference to a car crash.))

Clay could feel the tension fade between himself and George as they played Minecraft together. Something so familiar and normal for the two of them seemed to heal whatever odd rift had been there before, and he was deeply relieved that everything felt much more calm.

They had been playing for nearly five hours when George's stomach growled loudly.

"How about we take a break from the game and I make us some dinner?" Clay leaned over the back of his chair to smile at his companion. The blonde just couldn't help but smile when he looked at George.

"Sure," The brit agreed, also smiling gently, his cheeks flushed. *I wonder why that is?*

"What do you feel like? I've got loads of stuff I can make."

"Surprise me, I suppose. Something Floridian."

"Orange juice and alligator it is."

George looked horrified. "You people eat alligator?"

"I was kidding, man, don't worry," Clay grinned, holding in a laugh. "I'll go make us some Cuban sandwiches."

The brunette visibly relaxed. "Alright then."

And so the Floridian rose from his seat, shut off his PC, and made his way to the kitchen. Halfway through making the sandwiches, he decided he might as well whip up some dessert too, so in attempts to keep the theme of Florida, the blonde made his favorite Key Lime pie recipe. Once it was finished, he put it in the fridge to set. Just then, the Brit entered the kitchen, eyeing the sandwiches in front of his friend.

"Your sunshine-state meal, sir," Clay handed George a plate and a tall glass of orange juice before grabbing his own sandwich off the counter. They settled onto the grey couch in the living room and dug in.

"Thank you for dinner," George said, his mouth full of food. Clay tried not to laugh, nearly choking on his drink, because George had mustard on his chin.

"Here, buddy," The blonde reached out and carefully wiped the mustard away with his thumb. He felt heat bloom under his fingers as George's face blushed a deep crimson, and Clay grinned. "You're blushing."

Shit, why did I say that?

"Am not," George smiled nervously, sounding flustered, and looked away.

Well now what the hell does that mean?

"Sure, sure," Chuckling, the Floridian took a swig of orange juice.

After a few minutes of near-silence, the only noise being the sound of them chewing, Clay spoke up again.

"I made some pie, too, if you want some."

"Pie? What kind of pie?"

"...Spotted dick."

George frowned, confused. "You know how to make spotted dick?"

Clay laughed loudly and shook his head. "No, it's key lime. I just thought that was funny."

"Oh," George chuckled. "You really had me there!"

The Brit went and cut himself a slice of pie before returning to his seat beside Clay.

"I've never had key lime pie before, I don't think," He muttered sheepishly, not quite sure what to make of the green-looking food in front of him. "Is it good?"

"Wouldn't have made it for you if it wasn't good," Clay gave him a gentle smile. "I think you'll like it."

"If you say so," George sighed, nervous, but he trusted his friend, so he took a bite. The brunette contemplated it for a moment before frowning at Clay.

"If you don't like it you don't have to eat it," The green-eyed young man was still smiling as he watched George.

"No, I do like it. I just can't seem to fathom that *you* made it."

"Wha-- Ha!" Taken aback but ultimately amused, Clay burst out laughing. "Ha-Ha-- Why the hell not? That's my sister's recipe, she taught me to make it herself!"

George took another bite of the pie and looked out the glass doors to his left. "How is your sister doing?"

He immediately regretting asking that.

"She's... alright," The Floridian's good humor had disappeared at the question. "She still hasn't found a job. No one will hire her."

"That's stupid," George frowned, now concerned for his friend; He hadn't meant to upset him, but he should've thought a bit more before bringing up such a sensitive topic. "Why not?"

"You know why," Clay huffed, leaning back into the couch, wishing it would swallow him alive. No matter how long it had been since the accident, thinking of his sister always put him in a sour mood. "People don't want to hire drunk drivers. Especially not one-armed drunk drivers."

"She's gotten sober, though, hasn't she?" Getting more anxious about Clay's mood by the second, George put his plate of pie down on the coffee table and shifted closer to the blonde. "They can't hold the past against her."

"They *shouldn't*, but that doesn't mean they won't. They always refuse it on basis of 'she won't be able to work as well as others' because she lost her arm. It's so ridiculous." Clay nearly spat his words, his tone so full of venom.

His little sister had always been his favorite sibling. He was very protective of her, and when she had to have her arm amputated in order to save her life after a terrible crash, it damn near broke him. Thankfully he had George to support him in that trying time, and now George was here to comfort him again.

The brown-eyed young man engulfed Clay in a warm hug. "It's in the past, Clay. She's alive, she's healthy, she's okay. She'll get a job soon, and it'll all be alright."

Clay nearly sobbed, he was so happy to have George there. There were no words to describe how badly he wanted to kiss his best friend right then, for how gracious he was.

But, in an incredible feat of restraint, he simply hugged him back.

The embrace lasted a few seconds longer than it should have, but it felt like it was over too soon. Unbeknownst to each other, both of the young men wished they could stay there for just a little while longer, wrapped in the other's arms.

Morning came quickly once the two fell asleep in their respective bedrooms. Today, Clay rose before George, and immediately got to work on making a pot of coffee and some bacon for them to share. The blonde put the bacon on a large plate, took a sip of hot coffee, and wondered if George would wake up before the bacon got cold, when the man in question stepped into the kitchen.

The bags under his eyes from the previous morning were gone, but he still looked exhausted. With his black t-shirt twisted up and his hair a rats nest, by God, did he look *adorable*.

Clay grinned brightly, like he always did when he saw George. "Good morning, sleeping beauty."

"Coffee," George grumbled, reaching up to rub the sleep out of his eyes. "Please."

"As you wish."

Clay poured George a mug of coffee and set it on the table, where George had taken a seat, then brought over the large plate of bacon.

Without another word, George dug in.

Half the bacon was gone before either of them spoke.

"So," George said, taking a sip of his coffee. "What's the plan for today?"

"I hope you packed a swimsuit."

Confused and suddenly nervous, George knit his eyebrows together and frowned at Clay. "Yes, I did. Why?"

"You'll see."

"You said that yesterday, and then you nearly got yourself killed."

"I can promise no one will be nearly dying today."

"Oh, so you'll *actually* die this time?"

Clay wheezed. "No."

"If you say so..."

"Would you *please* just tell me where we're going? Are all of our excursions going to be secretive?" George whined, tapping his foot against the floor of the SUV. He chewed his lip, constantly glancing out the window to try and figure out where they were headed. He had long since ruled out the idea of going to the beach-- They had passed several different public beaches that hadn't even caught Clay's attention. But he couldn't figure out where else he would need to be wearing a pair of swim trunks.

"Like I said, you'll see!" The taller young man chuckled as he flipped on his turn signal, before pulling into a parking lot. George leaned forward to read the sign on the building in front of them.

"A sailing business?" He questioned. "Are we going sailing?"

"Yep!" Clay shut off the car and unlocked his door. "I thought it might be nice to do something a little more low-key after the adventure yesterday."

Following suit, the Brit stared out over the water of the little ocean inlet they were facing. George had never been on a boat before, and was worried he might get seasick, but was nonetheless excited. A sailing trip didn't sound too bad; Relaxing in the sun with Clay would be wonderful.

Other than, of course, the predicament of the swim trunks.

"If we're going on a boat, why do we need swimsuits?"

"That's still a secret." Clay flashed George a wide smile, *Damn, why is he always fucking smiling? He's too cute for his own good...* And threw open the door of the sailing business. George followed behind him, worried once again.

George had never been incredibly *fit*. He was always thin, and never anywhere close to overweight, but that didn't mean he wasn't uncomfortable with the idea of taking off his shirt. More specifically, he was uncomfortable with taking off his shirt in front of *Clay*. It was no secret that Clay had some muscle to him-- His biceps looked like baseballs, which was a little distracting, to say the least-- And George hadn't even seen him remove his shirt. If he were to be stood beside the much taller and more built man, shirtless, George's self confidence might plummet at the immense differences. It concerned him, how *perfect* Clay seemed to look.

But the worry over his self confidence was small in comparison to his fear of being flustered.

In less than 48 hours George had realized he was developing a crush on his best friend of several years, and he knew he didn't have a snowflakes chance in Hell with the man. Seeing him shirtless would both assure him of his impossible chances and absolutely embarrass him. George could hardly keep himself from blushing when Clay simply smiled at him, how the Hell was he meant to keep his eyes of his friend's body, in the event that it's exposed?

Oh fucking well. Suck it up. Just don't let him know you're falling for him. Hurt yourself, not the friendship.

After a solid 15 minutes of waiting around, the two young men and a handful of other people were boarded onto a large white catamaran. They were escorted into the seating area inside the boat, to wait a bit more until they were in open water before they could go out onto the front of the boat and enjoy the sun. The co-captain offered everyone drinks, and despite it being noon, Clay took a bottle of beer.

"You know you have to drive us back after this, don't you?" George asked, a little irritated.

"I'm just gonna have one beer, George. It'll be fine." Clay assured him.

Once they were released from the seating area, Clay was the very first out on deck. He inhaled deeply and grinned, loving it out on the water in the blazing sun.

George was just a step behind him, gazing out over the sparkling water in awe.

"It's beautiful out here," He murmured.

"Isn't it?" Clay said breathily, his eyes unfocused. Then he turned to look at George, who didn't notice, being so preoccupied with looking out at the ocean. "...So beautiful."

They settled into a spot at the very front of the catamaran, nearly on the edge of the deck, which worried the brown-eyed young man, but his companion wasn't concerned.

It seemed they sailed for hours, but the sun stayed put in the sky directly above them. Maybe time just didn't flow here, where George could simply glance over and see an angel. Maybe he had died and gone to heaven. It all felt so perfect and blissful.

Right up until he saw an island in the distance.

"Alrighty folks!" The co-captain announced from below deck. "Strip down to those swim trunks, everybody! We're dropping you here."

"They're *what*?" George hissed, staring at Clay with wide eyes.

"They're stopping the boat," He explained. "We're swimming to that island."

"Oh, good Lord."

"What, can't you swim?" Clay joked.

"Of course I can swim! But not that *far*!"

"It's not even a third of a mile. You can do it, Georgie, c'mon, I believe in you!"

Pouting, George crossed his arms and glared out over the water at the island. It just had to ruin the good day, didn't it?

But then Clay stood up and peeled off his shirt, and George felt like thanking the island for its service.

The blonde had a sharp collarbone, defined abs, and a flawless tan. He could've been an Abercrombie model, for Christ's sake.

It took George a second to pick his jaw up off the deck, but he quickly gathered his thoughts and turned away, to try and hide his red face. George inhaled deeply and rose from his seated position, trying to be brave, and took off his shirt as well, ready to dive in and swim to the island.

There wasn't much Clay could do besides stare. He couldn't really help himself.

George was very slender, but lean, with his waist being curved in a unique, attractive, effeminate way. His skin was fair and smooth like marble. In the back of his mind, Clay recalled his sister talking about Edward Cullen from Twilight, and how he was gorgeous beyond belief or whatever. Now Clay sort of understood what she had meant.

And he somehow couldn't think of anything to say. He *always* had something to say.

"What're you two waiting for? Dive in!" The co-captain slapped them both on the back and pushed them closer to the back of the boat, where they were meant to jump off and into the water. George winced when the man's hand made contact with his shoulder, and this sort of snapped Clay out of his stupor, making him frown. But he didn't have any time to complain, because in the blink of an eye, George was in the water.

Clay watched silently as his best friend paddled in the direction of the island, before jumping in after him. Of course, always one for competition, the Floridian kicked up a storm in attempts to pass George. When the brit noticed this, he immediately recognized the challenge, and sped up.

It was like this that they raced to the island. Once they reached the shore, they were both breathless and grinning like madmen.

"I totally won that!" Clay exclaimed.

"No you didn't!" George laughed. "I beat you here!"

"As *if*! George, just accept it, I won."

"Did not!"

"Fine then, first person to find a Venus Comb wins."

Clay then sprinted off in search of the shell, leaving George in the dust, wondering what the hell a

Venus Comb was.

Chapter End Notes

Hello again!

Insert Bernie Sanders meme here, I am once again thanking all of you for the incredible amount of hits and kudos'!

Over 100 kudos' in less than 48 hours?? And over 500 hits?! That's SO crazy!! I'm so grateful.

My birthday is today (June 4th) and I couldn't ask for a better gift than this. Thank you all so much!

Your comments are deeply appreciated and I love you all, have a great day!!

Next chapter coming soon, hope you enjoy!

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

((A/N: Little bit of vvvvvveeeerrrrrryyyyyy low-key sexual tension happening, just a heads up and an apology in advance!))

The sun had gotten significantly lower in the sky by the time the co-captain called everyone back to the catamaran.

George, hauling a gallon-sized bag full of large seashells, frowned, not quite sure how he would swim back with the bag in tow.

"Here," Clay reached out and took the shells. "I'll carry them."

"Thank you," George blushed, embarrassed but grateful.

"Of course."

Once they were back on the boat, both soaking wet and dripping salt water, the two young men settled back into their spot on the edge of the deck. Neither of them put their shirts back on; They wanted to dry off a bit so they wouldn't be sitting in wet clothes. Plus, although this went unsaid, they both were enjoying the view.

Clay laid back on the deck and closed his eyes, smiling softly. George watched him quietly, his heart beating hard and his face a light pink. He wanted very badly to curl up next to his friend and rest his head on his chest. By the minute, George was falling further for Clay.

"Lay down," Clay said, as if he had read George's mind. "The running and the swimming probably made you tired."

"Yeah," George murmured, although he didn't lay down. "You remember that time you yelled at me to get in the bed?"

The Floridian laughed, not opening his eyes. "Yes. I swear I didn't mean to sound that angry, I just thought we were gonna die."

"It's fine. The viewers got a kick out of it," The brunette chuckled.

"Sure did. Your reaction helped that along."

"What?"

"You blushed and got all flustered when I said it, I saw it on the face cam," Clay opened his eyes and smirked at George. Was it a sunburn, or was the blonde blushing?

"Oh." George looked away. He contemplated that, and realized he wasn't surprised. Perhaps he'd had feelings for Clay longer than he knew?

They fell silent, listening to the waves slapping against the hull. George still didn't lay down, and continued to look out over the water. Clay watched him from the corner of his eye, admiring the water dripping from his hair and running down his back, very much wishing he could sit up, kiss George's cheek, and tell him just how beautiful he looked right then.

A loud gasp from the back end of the catamaran made them both whip around.

"A shark!" One of the women on the boat yelled, scrambling to the front deck. "There's a shark!"

"Sweet," Clay grinned, rising from his spot.

"Don't you dare go back there," George said, scared. "You promised me no one would die today!"

"I'm not gonna jump in the water or anything," Clay rolled his eyes. "I'm just gonna go look at it."

With that, the blonde calmly walked to the back deck. George stumbled to his feet and followed him, scared out of his wits that his friend might fall in. Clay leaned over the back railing, searching for the shark that had supposedly been spotted behind them, peering into the depths.

"Oh, there it is!" He pointed, a few feet to the right, to a large shadow in the water. Then the shadow grew larger, and a black fin appeared above the waves. "Ooh, it's a blacktip! She's huge!"

"Back up!" George whined, a little panicked. His first time on a boat and he's going to watch his best friend get eaten by a shark.

"I'm fine, Georgie. See?" Clay leaned even further out over the water, looking over his shoulder to smirk at the concerned young man.

Everything happened very quickly.

Suddenly, Clay's foot had slipped, and he nearly tumbled over the side and out into the water. George, acting on instinct, flew forward and grabbed Clay's shoulder, tearing him away from the railing and slamming him against the outer wall of the captain's quarters.

"Good God, Clay!" George spoke loudly, his voice an octave higher than normal. "Be careful!"

Clay didn't know what to say. He was breathless, and it wasn't because he nearly took a swim with a shark. George was positioned protectively in front of him, both hands on his chest, holding him against the wall. They were unbearably close to each other, so close that Clay could feel George's cool breath.

"Uhh..." was all he could muster. It felt like his face was terribly sunburnt.

It was at that moment that George seemed to realize how close they were, and took a step back, bumping into the railing behind him. "Sorry."

"Don't be," The floridan tried to give him a smile, but he wasn't sure it turned out quite right. His heart felt tight in his chest, and he ached to be close like that again. "You probably just saved me from losing a leg or something."

"I wouldn't have needed to save you if you weren't being stupid!" George huffed. "Seriously, you'll be the next Florida Man headline."

Clay wasn't sure how to respond to that, so he just gently pushed past George, so he wouldn't be pressed against the wall anymore. If he could have chosen, he would have been the one to push George into the wall... But whatever.

The boat docked slowly, and soon everyone jumped off. The sun was starting to set, but George didn't really think much of it. Not like he could see the colors.

Clay, on the other hand, was fixated on it. Even when they got into the car and were pulling out of the parking lot, Clay continued to repeatedly glance out the window at the sky.

"It's so pretty," He would say occasionally. "That's gotta be the prettiest sunset I've ever seen."

"Prettier than our Minecraft sunsets?" George asked, half-joking.

Clay flashed him a crooked smile. "No, not quite that pretty."

"Should we go find a tree to climb so we can recreate it?"

"That's actually a *fantastic* idea!" The Floridan exclaimed. "I know exactly where to go."

Having been kidding, George was nervous again. Seriously, it was like Clay was trying to give him a panic attack.

"Uh... Clay?"

"Yeah?"

"I... Can't climb trees."

The blonde young man turned to frown at his friend. "What do you mean?"

"I mean I've never climbed a tree."

"...How?"

"I just haven't."

Clay looked forward again, contemplating that. "...I'll just have to teach you, I guess. Or carry you up."

George blushed furiously at the thought of being carried up a tree, and didn't respond.

A few minutes and long backroads through what appeared to be the middle of nowhere later, Clay parked the SUV outside of a tall gate betwixt two tall brick walls, which was padlocked. A sign, nailed into the grass, read "SUNSHINE STATE BOTANICAL GARDEN AND ORCHARD." The taller of the two young men turned off the engine and hopped out. George followed behind him, confused.

"It's closed," He said.

"And?"

Then Clay grabbed ahold of the tall gate, claiming a foothold on top of the steel padlock, and climbed. Once he was up far enough, he reached over to the top of the brick wall and hoisted

himself onto it, turning and taking a seat, facing George.

"C'mere," He said, reaching out. "I'll pull you up."

"No!" George stared at him. "That's illegal!"

"So? We won't get caught. I do this all the time."

"I don't know how many times I have to say this but you're fucking crazy."

"Would you just come over here?" Clay pouted, making grabby hands.

George gave in and sauntered over, reaching up both hands. At this, Clay grinned, before grabbing George's wrists in a tight hold and heaving him up onto the brick wall beside him. Clay let go of his companion's arms, swung his legs over to the other side of the wall, and jumped. Fortunately, the ground appeared to be a lot higher up on this end, and wouldn't break either of their ankles, so George jumped down after him.

The Floridian led them through the wide-spread garden, through groves of gorgeous flowers, till they stumbled upon a handful of orange trees. One of the trees was actually a very tall oak, that reached high above the orange trees, and it had a small platform built into the side of it, but it was lacking a ladder. This tree appeared to be what Clay had been looking for.

"Alright, lesson number one," He said, turning to George. "Only grab for branches that are at least as big around as your wrist. Lesson number two: Lift with your legs, not your arms, if you can help it. Lesson number three: Don't look down. Got it?"

"Umm..."

"Great! See you at the top."

Clay then scaled the tree, reaching the platform with ease. Frowning once more, George stepped up to assess the situation. He spotted a few good-looking footholds, and very carefully began to climb.

At one point, his foot slipped, and he thought he was going to fall, but he just pulled himself up with his arms as quickly as possible, and was fine. Eventually, and not quite as gracefully as Clay, George made it to the platform. From below, he hadn't realized just how tiny it was.

His shoulder was pressed up against Clay's, an electric current pulsing through them both, as they turned to look out over the tops of many other trees, and watch as the sun inched further from their vision behind the horizon. George couldn't focus on the sight in front of him. All he could feel was the tension in the air. It could have been cut with a wooden sword.

Can Clay feel this too?

Don't do it, don't do it, don't do it...

It was taking nearly all of Clay's willpower not to turn and look at George. He knew that if he did, he might not be able to stop himself from absolutely collapsing into tears. There was electricity in the air, it felt like lightning was about to strike him down.

It was killing him.

Clay was dying inside, wishing so badly that he could tell George how he felt. Even if he was rejected, it would be better than suffering silently at the thought of possibly having a shot. He needed to say it, say *something*, before he was consumed within his own mind. It was torturing him, not knowing if he was blowing his chance with his best friend by saying nothing.

Surely, even if George didn't feel the same, he could forgive Clay. Of course he would. George would never cut him off for something so uncontrollable... Right?

Clay lost the battle with his willpower and turned his eyes to George.

God, he's so beautiful. He deserves the world. I would give him anything. Everything.

Just then, George turned to look at Clay, and they locked eyes. George's breath caught in his throat.

Somehow it didn't feel awkward, as they gazed at each other, almost nose to nose.

"George..." Clay whispered.

"...Yes?" George responded, just as quiet.

"...George... I have to tell you something."

Chapter End Notes

Sorry this one is a bit shorter :(Working on next update soon!

Chapter 5

((Trigger warning, homophobia))

"I have something I need to tell you too," George muttered.

"Uh.. You go first, then." The blonde said sheepishly.

George took a deep breath and looked away, towards the horizon. His jaw clenched and he turned back to his companion.

"I like you, Clay. More than I probably should."

Clay's jaw dropped, and he was speechless.

"And I know that you're probably really grossed out, and I'm so sorry--"

"No!" The Floridian interrupted him. "No, no, I'm not grossed out, I just... You beat me to the punch."

George blinked. "What?"

"You took the words out of my mouth," He smiled, blushing a deep crimson. "I really like you too, George. I have for a long time now."

The brunette was wide-eyed, and could hardly respond, saying only a hushed "Oh."

Clay removed his arm from between them and slung it around George's waist, pulling him somehow closer. They were nose-to-nose, breath intermingling. George's eye darted quickly to Clay's lips then back up to his eyes, which Clay immediately recognized as the universal sign for *"Are we about to kiss right now?"*

"Can I kiss you?" The blonde whispered gently.

George didn't speak. He simply leaned forward and connected their lips. Clay melted, reaching up with his free hand to cup the side of George's face, his thumb running across the smaller young man's high cheekbone. There were butterflies, their wings alight with dancing flames, fluttering in Clay's stomach. He felt so warm inside he thought he might combust.

The sound of a tape rewinding played loudly in Clay's head.

Be realistic, dumbass, He thought. There's no way that could happen.

So he tried to think of a less fantastical scenario.

"What's on your mind?" George asked innocently.

"Please don't freak out."

"Is something wrong?"

"That... Depends."

"You're worrying me."

"It's really not that big of a deal, I just..." Clay inhaled deeply, trying to steel himself for any reaction that could come. "I have feelings for you."

"Excuse me?"

The sharpness of George's tone made him wince, dropping his eyes to his lap in fear.

"You mean to tell me," The young Brit's voice started to rise in volume. "You have some kind of *crush* on me?"

"I'm sorry," Clay whispered. He regretted saying anything. Why couldn't he just keep his mouth shut? The friendship wouldn't be ruined, then. What little he had with George was gone now.

"You should be!" George hissed. "That's *disgusting!* Get me out of this fucking tree, I'm leaving right now..."

"No, George," His voice was strained as Clay tried to hold back tears. "Please don't go. Can we just forget--"

"You're fucking homosexual trash, you know that?" The brunette spat, glaring, leaning as far away he possibly could manage on the little platform.

"George, please, no..." Clay felt like he was being strangled. How could he let this happen?

Clay blinked. "Uh..."

Back to reality, he wasn't sure what to say. There was a desperate need he felt, to communicate to George that he was hopelessly in love with him. But the words just wouldn't leave his mouth. Unfortunately for him, he had already brought attention to the fact that he had something to say, so he had to tell George something.

And so, in an odd combination of desperation to tell George how he felt and of yearning to keep his emotions a secret, Clay said, "You're... Breathtaking."

George chuckled. "That's a really shitty Keanu Reeve's impression."

Laughing weakly, Clay looked towards the horizon. "Yeah."

Once they were back at Clay's apartment, George went to take a shower as Clay made dinner.

The water stung his sunburnt skin, so the shower ended quickly. George realized he didn't bring his pajamas with him into the bathroom and groaned, wrapping a fluffy blue towel around his slender hips and opening the door to his room. He stepped out into the significantly cooler air and reached for his clothes, laid out on the bed. When he turned to head back into the bathroom, he froze in place.

The door to his room was wide open, and Clay was standing almost directly outside it, holding two plates of pizza slices. And, he was staring with wide eyes and a bright red face. Despite having spent nearly the whole day beside George while neither of them wore shirts, there was something different about seeing George wrapped in a towel, fresh out of the shower.

"Sorry," George mumbled, blushing, before turning on his heel to speed back into the bathroom. As soon as he had the door locked behind him, he practically collapsed against it, embarrassed beyond all belief.

Finally dressed, George went to the living room and took a seat beside Clay silently. Clay was brandishing a slice of pizza in one hand and the remote in the other as he scrolled through Disney+ in search of something to watch. It was as if nothing had happened.

He stopped on the second star wars movie.

"Wanna watch the next one?" He asked, taking a bite of pizza.

"Sure."

The movie began, and George made a silent pact with himself not to fall asleep this time.

This, of course, didn't work, and he was passed out less than 20 minutes into the movie, once again slumped against Clay's side.

Clay was tired too. Today had been a long day for them both, and it was pretty late. They had taken the scenic route back from the orchard, and it was late when they got home, nearly 11. Neither of them had eaten on the boat, and the only snack they'd had since breakfast was an orange they shared on the drive back. Clay had stolen it from one of the trees, and George had practically fainted.

He's so adorable.

Gently, Clay planted a kiss on George's forehead, and sighed. *I'm going to tell him before this trip is over. If he hates me for it, then he never has to see me again. He can fly back to England and forget all about me.*

Another little voice spoke in his head; *And what if he doesn't hate you for it? What if, by some miracle, he feels the same?*

Considering that, Clay yawned, easily drifting off to sleep as he thought up pleasant scenarios in which George loved him back.

Morning came quickly, and George was the first awake. He was confused-- Why was he so warm? And what was that weight around his chest?-- but he realized with a shock what had happened.

We fell asleep on the couch.

Even before he had opened his eyes, the brunette knew the answers to his questions. Clay, arms wrapped around George protectively, chin rested on top of his head, was fast asleep.

Oh my God oh my god oh my God oh mY GOD OH MY GOD was all he could think. Panic coursed through him as he finally opened his brown eyes.

During the night, the two of them had shifted, and George was lying back against Clay's chest. Clay was still practically sitting up, one arm wrapped around George's chest and the other around his waist, as if he were trying to tuck the smaller young man into himself and shield him from something.

As comfortable as he was, George needed to get up. Not because he didn't want to be there, but because he had to pee.

"Clay," He whispered, reaching up a hand to his friend's head to tap his forehead. "Hey, Clay, wakeup."

"Mhmm..." The blonde murmured. "No..."

"Clay, I need to go to the bathroom. Let me go."

"Wha..?" The green-eyed young man frowned, blinking his eyes open and lifting his head up. Then he realized that he was cuddled up to George, and he was suddenly wide awake. "Shit, what?"

"We fell asleep on each other," George tried to keep the embarrassment out of his voice. His heart was beating at the speed of sound and he worried that Clay could hear it. "I need to pee, could you let me up?"

"Oh! Yeah," Clay released his friend and scooted away, flustered. "I'll, uh... I'll make some coffee."

Wordlessly, George rose, nodded, and left the room.

Leaning against the doorframe, George watched as Clay cooked them pancakes. There was batter all over the kitchen, and it looked a mess, but George couldn't help but smile at the sight. His friend was wearing a white apron, much too small for him, that said "Momma's Little Chef" across the front in blue text. No doubt Clay had owned that apron since he was little, and George thought it was adorable that he still wore it.

Clay flipped another pancake onto the growing stack beside him. George worried there would be leftovers, but his stomach was growling and so he reconsidered.

George then thought back to how he had woken up.

He hadn't wanted to get up. Cuddling up to Clay was very comfortable, and even now he missed it. He wanted more. The electric feeling he felt when they were that close was intoxicating. There was

absolutely no question about it now; George was head over heels, and needed to do something about it.

I'll have to tell him, He thought. He has a right to know, so he can shut me down.

They ate breakfast silently, gulping down the pancakes in a matter of seconds. Clay was the first to speak.

"So I thought today we could go to the beach. Since we haven't done that yet."

"Sounds good," George said around a mouthful of food. "We can make my sunburn even worse."

"Wear sunscreen this time, dummy."

George chuckled and took a swig of apple juice. He had finished the entire gallon in 4 days.

"And maybe we'll stop at the store and get more apple juice," Clay smiled.

It was cooler today, in the high seventies, and just a little cloudy. George was spread out in a beach chair, a book in his hands, peacefully enjoying the breeze coming off the water... when Clay dumped a bucket full of seawater on his head.

"DREAM!" He yelled, jumping up, shocked by the cold water. Clay laughed and ran away toward the water, knowing (or at least assuming) that George wouldn't follow him in.

He was wrong.

George set his book down in the sand and marched after his friend, determined to somehow get him back.

Clay was waist-deep in the waves, grinning, waiting for George to approach. He had his bucket at the ready again, but this time he had seaweed in with the water.

The shorter young man walked straight into the water, not shying away from the cold, although he did break out in goosebumps. Soon he was also waist deep in the water, a little less than seven feet away from Clay.

"C'mere Gerogeeeee!" Clay taunted.

"No!" George called back. A wave slapped him in the stomach, knocking the breath out of him.

"Aw, c'mon! I have a present for you!"

"Clay, I swear to God--"

A huge wave appeared behind him, and George saw an opportunity. He began to wade forward, bit by bit, till he knew he was close enough to jump at the right time.

"Don't you wanna see what I have?" The blonde giggled, shaking his bucket. "Come over here, just a little closer!"

"Clayyyy," George said in a sing-song voice, as the big wave approached.

"Georgeeeee," His friend said in the same sing-song voice, thinking they were simply playing around.

Then, just at the right moment, George dove forward and pushed Clay backwards, as the wave came crashing down upon them both.

The two young men came up sputtering, both spitting out water and laughing hysterically.

"That's what you get for dumping water on me!" George giggled.

"You're the one who came all the way out here! It hardly makes a difference now!"

"I guess you're right," The shorter young man frowned. He reached up and grabbed Clay by the hair, then dunked his head into the water again. "But I still win!"

George then quickly swam away, headed back to shore.

Clay was left speechless, not sure how to feel, but grinning nonetheless.

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

"Hey, George, I'm gonna order some lunch, what do you feel like?" Clay asked, settling onto the sand.

"I dunno. Surprise me."

"You'll regret that," The taller young man grinned, before pulling up a menu on his phone. George raised his eyebrows, but stayed quiet. He returned to reading his book.

After a few minutes, Clay smiled triumphantly. "Our order will be here in 20 minutes!"

"They deliver to the beach?"

"Some places do."

"That's odd."

"That's Florida, baby."

Georges face went red, and Clay realized what he'd said too late. Laughing nervously, he got up and tossed his phone into their shared beach bag.

"I'm gonna go see about a boogie board, I think," The Floridan gestured in the direction of a little shack on the boardwalk back to the parking area. "Do you want one?"

"I have no idea what that is."

"How about I show you how to use one with mine and then we'll think about it."

"If you say so," George shrugged, absorbed in his book on coding.

"Alrighty, nerd." Clay stuck out his tongue at George and walked away. The brunette glanced above the brim of his sunglasses (a pair of clout goggles, courtesy of Clay upon arrival at the beach) and watched his companion saunter off.

A deep sigh escaped his lips as he wondered what to do next.

Being here with Clay was feeling as natural as breathing, and he was beginning to struggle with the idea of going back to England. As much as he loved his home, he was starting to like it here in sunny, humid Florida... For one particular, obvious reason. Clay had a magnetic quality to him, and George had just been drawn in so close that he couldn't fathom escape at this point. He was irrevocably, inexplicably, and unquestionably in love.

"Turns out they only sell drinks and little baggies for collecting shells. But!" Clay announced, approaching with two styrofoam boxes. "Our food is here!"

"Good, I'm famished."

"Are you reading a thesaurus or are you just that much of a nerd?"

"Oh be quiet, you play fucking video games for a living."

"So do you!"

"Whatever. Food!"

Clay laughed and handed one of the boxes to George. The brown-eyed young man flipped it open and eyed the fried mystery-bits suspiciously.

"Just try it," The Floridian elbowed him, already chowing down on whatever he had ordered for himself. "Trust me."

Frowning, and worried as always, George gingerly picked up the smallest bit of fried food and took a bite. "It tastes... Like cod, maybe? Or is it chicken?"

"You were closer with the first guess. Try again."

"I dunno. What is it? What other kind of fish would you fry?"

"It's not really *fish* so to speak..."

George furrowed his brow and took another bite. As he chewed, he had a sudden realization, and nearly gagged. "Oh my God! Is this alligator?"

"Ding ding ding!"

The Brit cringed and closed the styrofoam container, handing it to his friend, who was in hysterics.

"It's not that bad, c'mon! You won't even eat another piece?" Clay grinned.

"No! That's horrible! You eat it."

"Aw, no, George..." Stifling his laughter, the blonde pouted. "But you'll go hungry!"

"I'll be fine."

"No, here," Clay passed him his box of food, a third of which he'd eaten, but the rest was left unscathed. It looked to be tacos with a side of chips. "Eat this. I'll eat the 'gator."

Sheepishly, George accepted the tacos. He was just a little too hungry to say no. "Thank you, Clay."

"No problem." Another soft smile that made George melt.

They had spent nearly five hours at the beach together, and were each slathered in saltwater and sand, when they decided to head home. George apologized profusely for getting sand in Clay's car, but Clay insisted that it was fine and that it wouldn't be the first time sand had gotten in the seats. As soon as they arrived at the apartment, they flipped a coin for who got to shower first. George won, and got rinsed off.

In the middle of his shower, he heard a knock on the door.

"Hey, I'm gonna be out here at my computer. Just wanted to let you know so I don't scare you when

you come out."

"Thanks!" The brunette called back.

Stepping out of the bathroom, free of sand and salt water, George leaned over Clay's shoulder to see what he was up to.

"I'm thinking of streaming. Would you wanna play some ultimate tag with me?" The blonde said.

"Sure, but I doubt my laptop could handle that. I would probably lag out."

"Oh, you're right. Damn. Maybe just a simple speed run and q&a?"

"Sounds perfect."

"Cool. I'm gonna shower, be out here in a bit and we can get started. Could you tweet out the we're gonna stream on my channel?"

"Yeah."

"Thanks, man."

Once Clay had retreated to his room to get ready to shower, George pulled out his phone and opened Twitter.

GeorgeNotFound:

Keep an eye out. Surprise stream in the next hour? Check on Dream's twitch...

Almost instantly after posting, there were a dozen or more likes. George then marched into the kitchen to find a snack while he waited. He discovered a Sabra Hummus snack container and tore it open, settling at the kitchen table. While he ate, he scrolled through twitter.

"George?" Clay called.

"Kitchen!"

"There you are," The taller of the two poked his head into the kitchen and smiled. "Ready to face to fans?"

"I hope you don't mean literally. You sure you're ready for a face reveal, looking like that?"

It was a struggle to play that off as a joke, George found. Clay was looking as incredible as ever, and would surely break a thousand hearts if he were to show their fans how he looked. His dirty blonde hair was wet and messy, and his high cheekbones were tinted red from the long day in the sun. George wanted to both kiss him and call the authorities, simply because it was such a crime to look that cute.

"No, not literally," Clay chuckled. "But they will be a little surprised to hear that you're in Florida."

"Oh. Yes, probably."

"Well let's get started."

The first dozen people onto the stream and in the chat were very confused. They asked several times why George had been the one to announce that Clay was streaming.

"Cause I have a surprise," Clay said each time. George was silent, while he joined the server that Clay had started. Once he was on, Clay gave him a thumbs up, and spoke again. "Hiii George."

"Hello," George said from his spot on his bed. He didn't have a mic, but he knew the stream could hear him in the background. Clay began to read out the chat.

"Is George's volume turned down?" No, it's not. He doesn't have a microphone... 'Why does it sound like he's in the same room?' Well why do you think?"

"That was a little rude," George scooted over to the corner of the bed, closer to Clay's setup so he could be heard more clearly. "Be nice."

"Sorry," The blonde chuckled. "Oh, they're going off now..."

The shorter of the two leaned forward to read the chat over his companion's shoulder.

OMG IS GEORGE LITERALLY THERE

Dream? Did you go to England?

HE FLEW HIM OUT TO FLORIDA HE SAID HE WOULD

THERES NO WAYyyyYyy!!1!

"Yes, he's here with me," Clay explained. "He's visiting for the week."

"I've been here for like four days now. I'm trapped, guys, please send help, he's got me locked up--"

"George!" The Floridian wheezed. "Don't lie!"

"What? I have been here for four days."

Laughing, Clay started to punch a tree in their Minecraft server. George looked back at his computer and did the same.

"So we're gonna do a speed run and q&a today," Clay said. "Because obviously George couldn't bring his whole PC with him to Florida so we couldn't do anything super crazy."

Almost immediately, a dono came in with a question.

User9364228 donated \$3!

Is George enjoying the warm weather ?

"No. I'm being boiled alive in this ridiculous humidity," He answered, smiling lightly.

"You're kidding! We spent all day at the beach today, and you didn't complain about it being hot *once!* "

"That's cause you dumped a bucket of freezing water on my head!"

"Oh, shush."

User723610 donated \$1!

George please tell us if Dream is actually blond or if h wa lying to us

"Yes, he's blonde."

"Why would I lie to you guys?"

User456991 subbed!

User129868 donated \$8!

Dream I dare you to tel George you love him to his face rn

"What? Why?" Clay murmured, pretending to be focussed on killing sheep. George noticed the strain in his voice, but doubted anyone else would have.

User837442 donated \$20!

Dream please tell George you love him ill donat another 10 dollar

"Jeez, these donations just keep piling in, don't they?"

George frowned at Clay's second redirection. Usually he didn't hesitate to say what the donos wanted him to.

User995681 donated \$6.50!

dream y won't you say you love him

Quickly and without looking away from his screen, Clay said, "George I love you."

The words, however void of truth, made George's heart flutter in his chest. He ached to say it back.

And on the stream went like this. The questions were always variations of "why is George there" and "Omg are you two dating" with the occasional honest question like "hey could you give a shout out to this person." Clay ended the stream quickly; After they finished their speed run they did a bit of screwing around in the game, sort of just chasing each other down and killing one another, but it hardly hit an hour before he shut it down.

George piped up as soon as he knew Clay wasn't recording anymore.

"Why wouldn't you tell me you love me?"

Clay spun in his chair to stare at his friend. "What?"

"You never hesitate to say what the donations want you to."

"I didn't hesitate."

There was a flush to Clay's cheeks, and that only encouraged George to push the issue further. He was beyond curious at this point; He was hopeful. There had to be some chance that Clay was feeling the same way he was. Now George just had to muster up the courage to figure it out.

"Yes you did. Is there something going on?"

The blonde furrowed his brow, frowning for the first time since George had arrived in Florida.

"...If I tell you, you have to promise not to get mad."

Heart racing, George nodded.

"Alright..." Clay muttered. He looked a bit green in the face... George wondered absently if he would puke, but was too absorbed in his friend's words to think very hard about it. "George, I... Well, shit, I didn't expect this to come up so suddenly..."

"Please tell me," The brunette reached out one hand to touch Clay's. It was a new gesture for him-- He'd never done that before. But he felt so connected to Clay in a way that he couldn't explain. "I won't be mad."

"I've had feelings for you for God knows how long," The words poured out of Clay's mouth in a jumble. "You're the most incredible person I've ever known and I flew you out here in hopes that I would somehow stop feeling this way when we met in person because I know you don't like me back. But it's just gotten worse. I'm sorry, George, I should have told you sooner."

George blinked, speechless. He hadn't expected such a speech.

"I knew you'd be mad..." Clay hurried his face in his hands.

There wasn't much George could do besides stare in disbelief. "Mad?" He whispered. Then he carefully pulled Clay's hands away from his face. "Look at me, Clay."

The blonde appeared to be holding back tears. The sudden onslaught of emotion and confession made his shoulders tremble as he looked back at his best friend.

Inching forward, George stood up from his seat and moved closer to Clay. He wasn't sure where his confidence was coming from, but he felt as if he could fly.

Clay was holding his breath. He wasn't sure if George was about to spit in his face, punch him, or kiss him.

It wasn't long before he found out.

Their lips came together gently, as George closed the gap. Shocked, Clay took a moment to respond, before closing his eyes and reveling in the kiss. He didn't know if he was dreaming or if this was real, but he didn't care. It felt real, and it felt absolutely blissful.

When they pulled apart, Clay stared at George, slack-jawed.

Confidence having disappeared, George gulped nervously, blushing a beet-red.

"Am I asleep?" The Floridian whispered.

"No."

"Then this isn't a dream?"

"You're Dream. I'm George."

Clay laughed loudly at the shitty joke and pulled George into a huge hug, tears rolling down his tanned cheeks.

Chapter End Notes

Hey hey!!

So I personally feel like this chapter isn't my best, BUT, I am going away for a few weeks and won't be able to update. So I wanted to give something good for before I left! I'll write more when I've returned from my travels (I can't take my laptop with me) and I hope you've enjoyed this so far :)

I appreciate all the comments you guys put up, they all make me smile, and I'm sorry for this chapter being choppy and poorly written

<3<3<3

EPILOUGE

"Can I look yet?" George whined, his eyes shut tight and his arms crossed.

"No!" Clay giggled, leading him forward.

The ground beneath them didn't feel stable to George; He believed they were at the beach.

"This is ridiculous, Clay. What's going on?"

"You'll see! Open your eyes."

Exasperated, George opened his eyes to look at Clay. Nothing had changed, besides their location. As he had predicted, they were on the beach, as the sun was setting.

"We were here yesterday, honey. Why'd we come back?" He asked, raising his eyebrows at his boyfriend.

"Because I have a surprise. Take a good look around."

George obeyed his orders and peered out over the water at the sunset. Same old same old, dark yellow into more yellow. He looked at the beach around them. No one was there, because technically it closed at sunset.

"Okay, now, close your eyes again," Clay insisted.

A light pressure appeared upon the bridge of George's nose and the back of his ears, as if he were wearing glasses.

"Did you get me another pair of clout goggles?" He asked.

"No. Close, though. Now open your eyes."

George was greeted with the now-familiar sight of his boyfriend. He smiled. Despite being confused and annoyed with being dragged out on yet another adventure, he was happy to spend time with Clay.

"Anything different?" The taller young man asked.

George looked closer, and was shocked.

Clay's eyes appeared to be a bright shade of green, and so did his sweatshirt.

"I... Can see your shirt."

"Yes! Now look at the sunset!"

Clay stepped out of the way so George could see it.

The sky was lit up in a brilliant ombre of pink, orange, and crimson. It was a beautiful sight, that George would never have been able to see. His breath was snatched from his lungs as he stared at the horizon.

"I got you some colorblind glasses," Clay whispered gently, wrapping his long arms around

George's waist from behind. "Do you like them?"

"Let me look at you again," George answered, twisting around to look at his boyfriend again.

"Your eyes are so beautiful, Clay..."

Blushing, the blonde smiled, and kissed George's forehead. "Thank you, sweetheart."

"No, thank you," George stood on his tip-toes to press a kiss to Clay's cheek. "This is so thoughtful of you. I never knew you could be more gorgeous."

"I love you, George," The Floridian said as he hugged his companion tightly.

"I love you too, Clay."

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